

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the present amendment and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-19 have been rejected.

Claims 5 and 9 were objected to.

Claims 4-5, 14 and 19 have been canceled, without prejudice.

Claims 1-3, 8, 11 and 15-16 have been amended.

Claims 1-3, 6-13 and 15-18 are pending in this application.

Applicants acknowledge with thanks the Examiner's indication that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 3-5. Claim 1 has also been rearranged for clarity.

Inasmuch as claim 1 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's direction, applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is now allowable. In addition, independent claims 11 and 15 have been amended to include all of the recitations of amended claim 1, in apparatus form, and are therefore claims 11 and 15 are now deemed allowable as well for the same reasons.

Claims 1-3, 6, 11-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Raleigh (US 6377631). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 11 and 15 have been amended into a condition for allowance as detailed above.

Claims 2, 3 and 16 have been amended to remove redundant matter.

Claims 14 and 19 have been canceled.

Claims 2-3 and 6 are dependent on amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons. Similarly, claims 12-13 are dependent on amended claim 11, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons. Similarly, claims 16-18 are dependent on amended claim 15, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raleigh as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Chiang (US 5535150).

Claim 4 has been deleted, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raleigh as applied to claim 6 above, and further in view of Forssén et al (US 5649287). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 is dependent on amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been overcome.

Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raleigh. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 8 is dependent on amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been overcome.

Claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raleigh as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Chang et al (US 20030072354). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 10 is dependent on amended claim 1, hereby incorporated by reference, and are now deemed allowable as well, for the same reasons.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been overcome.

The other references of record have been reviewed and applicant's invention is deemed patentably distinct and nonobvious over each taken alone or in combination.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants respectfully request that the above rejections be withdrawn.

Inasmuch as this amendment distinguishes all of the applicants' claims over the prior art references, for the many reasons indicated above, passing of this case is now believed to be in order. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless applicant has argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

In the event that the Examiner deems the present application non-allowable, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the Applicants' attorney at the number indicated below so that the prosecution of the present case may be advanced by the clarification of any continuing rejection or through an Examiner's amendment.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fees necessitated by actions taken herein to Deposit Account 50-2117.

Respectfully submitted,
Vialle et al.

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